

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 PRETOR 04228 191348Z

ACTION NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W

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O 191536Z AUG 77

FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8493

S E C R E T PRETORIA 4228

NODIS CHEROKEE

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1, 2, 3

TAGS: PARM, SF

SUBJECT: POSSIBLE SOUTH AFRICAN NUCLEAR WEAPONS PROGRAM

REF: STATE 197389, PRETORIA 4222, PRETORIA 4211,

1. I DELIVERED THE SECRETARY'S LETTER TO PIK BOTHA TO BRAND FOURIE AT 1400. AFTER READING IT HE SAID HE THOUGHT THE LOCATION DESCRIBED COINCIDED WITH THE TESTING SITE HE HAD MENTIONED YESTERDAY. TO MAKE SURE, HE PLACED A PHONE CALL. FORTY MINUTES LATER THE PERSON CONTACTED CALLED TO CONFIRM THAT THIS WAS A "MILITARY TESTING FACILITY." I ASKED FOURIE IF HE COULD BE MORE SPECIFIC ABOUT THE NATURE OF THE TESTING GOING ON AT THE FACILITY. HE THOUGHT THAT MISSILE TESTING WAS INVOLVED BUT PREFERRED TO CONSULT WITH MILITARY AUTHORITIES CONCERNED BEFORE ATTEMPTING TO CHARACTERIZE THE SITE.

2. NOTING THE URGENCY ATTACHED TO THE SENDING OF A SMALL US TECHNICAL TEAM, I ASKED WHETHER I COULD EXPECT A RESPONSE WITHIN THE NEXT TWENTY-FOUR HOURS. FOURIE REPLIED THAT WITH THE PM OUT OF TOWN AND GIVEN THE NEED TO CONSULT MILITARY AUTHORITIES BECAUSE A MILITARY INSTALLATION IS INVOLVED, HE DOUBTED WHETHER A RESPONSE WOULD BE FORTHCOMING UNTIL EARLY NEXT WEEK. I POINTED
SECRET

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OUT THE SECRETARY'S STATEMENT THAT IT IS IN THE INTEREST OF BOTH GOVERNMENTS THAT THE VISIT TAKE PLACE NO LATER THAN SUNDAY, AUGUST 21. HE NODDED BUT MADE NO FURTHER COMMENT.

3. ATMOSPHERE TODAY WAS CORDIAL AND RELAXED. I ASKED FOURIE WHETHER BOTHA HAD CALLED OWEN ON THE RHODESIAN QUESTION AND HE SAID HE HAD.

4. DEPARTMENT PASS LONDON AND PARIS AS APPROPRIATE.
BOWDLER

SECRET

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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Channel Indicators: n/a
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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